

**In the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-8. Please amend claim 9. Please add new claim 17. The claims are as follows:

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) A method for selecting a voice prompt of an interactive voice response system that operates according to the compiled code of an application program that provides call flow instructions for the interactive voice response system, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a variable associated with the voice prompt by the application program;

assigning a value to the variable by accessing an assignment table that is held outside the compiled code of the application program; [[and]]

reading a database record that includes a digitally encoded voice prompt, wherein the database record is identified by the value assigned to the variable;

passing the voice prompt from the database record that had been read to an audio apparatus;

performing, by the audio apparatus, a digital-to-analog conversion of the voice prompt that had been passed to the audio apparatus; and

speaking, by the audio apparatus, a message to a telephone caller, said message consisting of the digital-to-analog converted voice prompt.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the database includes a first voice prompt in a first

language and a second voice prompt in a second language, wherein the first language and the second language are different.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the database includes a first voice prompt spoken by a first speaker and a second voice prompt spoken by a second speaker, wherein the first speaker and the second speaker are different.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the database includes a first voice prompt spoken by a male speaker and a second voice prompt spoken by a female speaker.

13. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the database includes a first voice prompt having a first level of formality and a second voice prompt having a second level of formality, wherein the first level of formality and the second level of formality are different.

14. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the database includes a voice prompt that includes music.

15. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the database includes a voice prompt that includes an audio tone.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the database includes a first voice prompt and a second voice prompt spoken by the same speaker, wherein the first voice prompt

and the second voice prompt convey the same meaning, and wherein the first voice prompt and the second voice prompt differ in wording.

17. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein the digitally-encoded voice prompt consists of a sequence of beeps.